Weekly Colonist

FRIDAY, MARCH 16TH, 1888.

THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

Proceedings of the Second Session of the Fifth Parliament.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

MONDAY, March 12th.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at 2:15 p.m.

Prayers were said by the Rev. Donald Fraser.

PETITIONS.

Mr. Duck presented a petition from the Matsqui Land Company.

Mr. Martin presented a petition from G. E. Sword against the repeal of the Sumas Dyking Act.

Mr. Orr presented petitions from the inhabitants of Vancouver and Westminster cities in reference to the Coal Mines Regulation Act.

The petition of the Presbytery of Columbia was read. This requested that the provisions of the proposed license act, dealing particularly with the hours of closing and number of licenses granted to saloons. Received and printed.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Col. Baker presented a report stating that the private bills committee had found the preamble of the Nicola Mining Co. bill to be correct.

Report received.

PRIVILEGE.

Mr. Beaven on a privilege asked the hon. leader when they might expect the proposed provisions which it was said in the speech from the throne were necessary to the B.N.A. Act. He would also like to obtain some knowledge in regard to the Crofter scheme set forth in the address. The house required time to consider these important matters.

Hon. Mr. Robson said with regard to the crofter scheme, it was stated that the house would probably be invited to consider a scheme for the immigration of a number of crofters. If a scheme was submitted, it would be done within a few days. No scheme was promised to be brought down. The matter had been the subject of negotiation up to the present time, and the submitting of a scheme would depend altogether upon what arrangements might be decided upon between the two governments. With regard to the statement in the speech that twenty years experience had demonstrated that there were defects in the constitution, nothing definite was promised. The matter was at present under consideration, but it was not positive whether the houses this session would be asked to consider amendments.

Hon. Mr. Humphreys asked when the papers concerning the Quesnelle Lake Dam and other papers would be furnished the house.

Hon. Mr. Vernon said in a few days, as soon as the department could furnish them.

Mr. Duck said that in the *Times* of Friday evening was printed what purported to be a first report of the select committee on public accounts. It was not the first report, but was a minority report, and was published with an endeavor to deceive the public. He trusted the paper would make the necessary correction.

OWNERSHIP OF PRECIOUS METALS.

Hon. T. Davie presented a return of all papers in connection with the ownership of the minerals within the railway belt.

DETENTION OF THE TEASER.

The Hon. Mr. Humphreys moved, seconded by Mr. Orr, that an humble address be presented to his honor the lieutenant-governor, praying his honor to cause to be sent down to the house at an early day, copies of all letters, documents and correspondence whatsoever, if any, passed between the superintendent of police, the hon. attorney-general and any other person or persons touching upon and relating to the pursuit and arrest of the steamer Teaser in Alaskan waters by the provincial authorities in November, 1885.

The hon. mover said that there had been, according to the evidence submitted, a serious miscarriage of justice in this matter, and he thought it most desirable that the papers should be furnished to the house.

Hon. Mr. Davie said there was no correspondence whatever in this matter that he could find in the attorney-general's office. He did not think the government had anything to do with it. It was an entirely private matter—the detaining of the steamer in question.

At the request of the hon. mover the resolution was put and carried.

THE SEA BIRD MATTER.

The Hon. Mr. Humphreys moved, seconded by Mr. Orr, that an humble address be presented to his honor the lieutenant-governor, praying his honor to cause to be sent down to this house at an early day copies of all letters, documents, and correspondence whatsoever passed between the superintendent of police, the hon. attorney-general and any other person or persons touching upon or relating to the alleged murder of Henry Moore and others in the schooner Seabird in June, 1886.

Capt. W. Moore created a sensation by striking his fist on the balustrade of the balcony.

Mr. Speaker stated that if there was any demonstration in the gallery he would order it cleared.

Capt. Moore rose and shaking his fist in the direction of the government benches shouted "that damn Turner and Theodore Davie," rapidly went down stairs.

Mr. Speaker ordered the sergeant-at-arms to remove the belligerent.

Order restored,

Hon. Mr. Humphreys said that it was with reluctance he moved in these two matters. He sympathized with the position of the hon. acting attorney-general. He trusted that all papers would be brought down. The family felt that proper means had not been taken to ferret out this supposed murder, and he thought it desirable that all papers should be produced so that there should be no suspicion.

Hon. Mr. Theo. Davie said that he was much obliged to the hon. gentleman for his proferred sympathy, but on this occasion it was not required. On public grounds the return asked for must be denied. There are now three persons in prison awaiting trial for this murder, and to produce the information and papers which had led to their arrest would be to prejudice either the case for the prosecution or for the defence. The mover of the resolution, Capt. Moore, or any of his friends were at liberty to come and inspect the papers, but general publicity would be denied.

Mr. Orr, seconder of the resolution, said that the statement of the honorable acting attorney-general was quite satisfactory to him. When he had seconded the resolution he was not aware that there were parties awaiting trial. He desired that the resolution might be withdrawn.

Mr. Beaven asked the hon. acting attorney-general if there was any truth in the rumor that he, while acting as attorney-general, had been engaged to defend the prisoners.

Hon. Mr. Davie said that previously to his entering the cabinet he had accepted a retainer from two of the prisoners to defend them. Owing to the two prisoners severing in their defences the retainer for one had, with the consent of that prisoner's friends, been handed over to Mr. Drake, but the retainer of the other he, Mr. Davie, still held and unless the friends of his client chose to release him he, Mr. Davie, would be bound to defend him at the trial, and would have no hesitation in doing so. The prosecution would be conducted by Mr. Irving, the deputy, or if thought necessary, other counsel would be engaged.

Mr. Beaven said if he understood the hon. gentleman aright he had been retained by the prisoners for their defence, and still intended defending them. He certainly thought a gentleman representing the Crown was placed in a peculiar position when he was sworn as a defender of the Crown and yet was counsel for the prisoners against the Crown. The deputy in the office was going to be the prosecuting counsel, and the chief of the department the counsel for the defence. It was a riddle that he could not understand, and he thought it anything but creditable that the acting Attorney-General should place himself in such a position.

Hon. Mr. Davie said that there was nothing anomalous in it at all. His retainer for the defence dated prior to his entering the government. In this particular matter he had a paramount duty to his client which he could fulfil consistently with the general duties of the office which for the time being he had to supervise. In this particular case he had not nor would interfere in any way. It had been, and would be, prosecuted by the deputy, or other counsel, if needed, without reference to him, (Mr. Davie) at all. When Mr. McCreight and Mr. Robertson entered the government in 1872 or 1873 they had business against the crown which they still conducted. He was sure that parallel instances could be quoted from other countries. According to the view now being advanced no counsel who had a defence against the crown could accept the position of crown counsel. He had every reason for believing that long before the cases of these Indians came on for trial, the attorney-general would have returned to his duties, but whether or no public interests would not suffer by his conducting the defence, Mr. Davie also referred to the case of the Indian Quamlet, for whom he had received a previous retainer, and said that he believed these were the only cases.

Hon. Mr. Humphreys claimed the there was no instance on record of a similar action to that which the hon. acting attorney-general had confessed. He was in a position to have access to all the papers of the prosecution, and still retained his fee as counsel for the defence. He (Mr. H.) considered the position held by him as anomalous and discreditable. He thought that there was no more danger to the prisoners or prosecution by bringing papers before the house than there was in allowing counsel for the defence to have access to them.

Hon. Mr. Davie said that he had never seen any portion of the papers and never expected to. If any one doubted this, let Mr. Irving, the deputy, be instantly brought to the bar to give evidence.

The resolution on being put was lost by a vote of 16 to 4.

GAME PROTECTION.

Mr. Anderson asked leave to introduce a bill intituled "An Act to amend the Game Protection Act, 1887."

Leave granted; read a first time; second reading on Friday.

VICTORIA GAOL.

Mr. Anderson moved, seconded by Mr. Thompson: That a select committee be appointed, to consist of Messrs. Duck, Higgins, McLeese, Orr, and the mover, to inquire into the condition and working of the Victoria gaol, with power to call for persons, books and papers, and to report to this house.

Carried.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. Mason asked the hon. leader of the government: "Is it the intention of the government to take any further steps in the immediate future towards promoting the construction of a line of railway into Cariboo district?"

Ans.: The government realizing the importance of the subject are giving it their earnest consideration.

Mr. Semlin asked the Hon. the Acting Attorney-General the following question:—Is it the intention of the government to introduce a bill this session for protecting cattle from destruction by railways?

Ans.: The Consolidated Railway Act of Canada already provides ample provisions.

BRIDGES PROTECTION.

The "Bridges Protection Bill" (Hon. Mr. Vernon) was read a third time and passed.

COUNTY COURTS.

The "County Courts Bill" (Hon. T. Davie) was read a third time and passed.

FOREIGN COMPANIES.

The bill for the purpose of incorporating foreign mining companies was read a third time and passed.

CATTLE RANGES.

Hon. Mr. Vernon in moving the Cattle Range Bill, said that the bill referred to what was known as commons. The cattle range protection act was for the purpose of setting apart certain portions of land for grazing purposes, payment of five cent per head being collected from stock raisers. This reserve was made for the purpose of protecting the smaller owners from large purchasers of pasture land. The total amount allowed in any one place was 16,000 acres. A wealthy cattle owner might run 1,000 head of cattle on these ranges and all the government received in taxes was $50. He thought the province should receive a greater amount than this. Cattle ranges adjacent to markets were more valuable than those which were remote.

Mr. Orr thought a minimum rate should be fixed, and the Lieutenant-Governor in council could fix a greater rate.

Mr. Semlin said ranges adjacent to the railway were frequently of less value than those which were more remote, on account of their being eaten out by large herds.

Mr. Beaven thought a fixed rate should be made. It was not desirable to leave the question of rates altogether to the discretion of the Lieutenant-Governor in council. As the bill related to trade and commerce the bill should be brought in through the medium of a select committee.

Mr. Speaker ruled that the bill did not come under the head of the rule quoted by Mr. Beaven, and was correctly introduced.

Mr. Beaven thought that a definite rate should be fixed.

Hon. Mr. Humphreys said the Lieutenant-Governor in council had no power to impose any tax. The house only had the power.

Hon. Mr. Robson said the matter affected the lands east of the Cascades, and it was impossible to make any rate to apply justly to all sections. He would like to know what difference there was in authorizing the lieut.-governor in council to settle the rentals to be paid for stock ranges in various portions of the country than there was in authorizing him to fix rates for timber lands or mining lands. The principle was just the same in each case, and there was just as much room for an expression of horror and indignation in one case as in the other.

Col. Baker said the bill was an important one for it would prevent the overstocking of ranges and the destruction of the bunchgrass by over feeding. At some future date it would be necessary to afford further protection in order to protect the grazing lands and thus secure a permanent wealth to the province. In the Northwest territories the matter was being paid attention to, for in certain portions where formerly a thousand cattle could feed ten could not now find sufficient to live upon, and where formerly was a luxuriance of grass there was nothing but dust. It was an erroneous idea to suppose that ten acres would feed one head, for it was demonstrated that thirty acres was necessary.

Mr. Martin said the measure was one for the purpose of setting aside a certain portion of the public lands and reaping from such reserve a revenue which would not otherwise be derived. He did not consider it a general tax. He also did not think that it would tend to reduce the number of cattle running on the ranges. He would support the bill, for it was a good measure.

Col. Baker said that by imposing a charge it would keep Indians from feeding their animals on these lands.

Mr. Orr said that the principle of allowing the lieut.-governor in council to fix a sliding scale was injudicious.

Mr. Grant did not think that one portion of the grazing lands was more valuable than another. There should be a rate fixed.

Hon. Mr. Dunsmuir said it was a difficult matter to fix a rate as proposed. He thought the opposition should accept the bill. They might be the government soon—it had been stated that the government would be defeated in two weeks.

Mr. McLeese thought the debate should be adjourned until further consideration of the principle was had. He would move the adjournment of the debate; seconded by Mr. Cowan.

Mr. Orr thought it most desirable that the debate should be adjourned, and the principle in question considered. The house should not relinquish the power of fixing any imposts.

Hon. Mr. Humphreys said he was in favor of the bill, but had two objections. The bill in the first place was not properly introduced, and in the second it was undesirable that the house should relinquish the power to the lieut.-governor in council to fix any imposts.

Hon. Mr. Davie said that the Speaker's decision covered the first objection, and as for the second, it was impossible for the house to fix a sliding scale, and the Lieutenant-Governor in council was the power to which it could be delegated. He had the power to fix charges for hay leases and for mining leases. The principle was the same in this case as in the other cases he had referred to, and he could see no objection to the present measure.

Mr. Higgins hoped that the introducer of the bill would consent to the adjournment of the debate. He would like to become better acquainted with its provisions and probable results before assenting to them. It might have a tendency to impose undue burdens on the poor settlers and create a monopoly for the rich stockmen. He was not prepared to vote for the measure to-night and wanted it laid over for a day or two.

Hon. Mr. Turner, while not opposing the adjournment of the debate, thought the present bill was similar in principle to others which had passed the house, and for which hon. gentlemen opposite voted. The power for fixing lesses, similar to the present one, was vested in the Lieutenant-Governor.

Hon. Mr. Vernon said it was quite evident that the hon. member for Comox did not understand the bill. Perhaps it would be desirable to postpone the debate for the present to allow the bill to better understood. Petitions had been received from several portions of the country asking for such reserves and it was desirable that the bill should pass in order that adequate returns should be received from its rental.

The debate was adjourned until Wednesday.

PRIVILEGE.

Mr. Grant stated that the report of the public accounts committee as printed was inaccurate. It was given as the first report of the committee. It should be headed "majority report," as there was a minority report.

Mr. Speaker asked the hon. leader of the opposition what his opinion was on the matter. The report signed by the majority was considered the report of the committee. In the house of commons there was no such thing a minority report.

Mr. Beaven thought the question would not have been raised if the majority had signed the report. But it was only signed by the chairman. The minority report was for the purpose of showing the dissentients.

Mr. Speaker said there was no such thing known as "majority" report. The "minority" report was printed simply to show the dissenting members. In the report of the dry dock committee, the majority report was signed by the chairman and the minority report by the dissenting members.

LAND REGISTRY ORDINANCE.

Hon. Mr. Davie, in moving the second reading of the Land Registry Ordinance, 1870, Amendment Bill, said that in the amendment passed last session, requiring registration in other districts, the registrars charged double fees, and it was to obviate this misunderstanding or misinterpretation, and to provide other details that he introduced this measure.

Second reading was set down for Tuesday.

House adjourned.

QUESTIONS.

Hon. Mr. Humphreys—To ask the provincial secretary:—At whose instance or authority was the lieutenant-governor advised to summon the legislative assembly for the despatch of business?

Mr. Orr—To ask the chief commissioner:—Is it the intention of the government to permit the Canadian Pacific Railway company to take possession of the harbor frontage lots in block 1 and block 6 in the old townsite of Granville, laid out by the coleny of British Columbia prior to confederation, and not included in the grant to the C. P. R. Co., as appears by their deed, and the map of said townsite registered in the land registry office.

MOTIONS.

Mr. Beaven—That a respectful address be presented to his honor the lieut.-governor requesting him to cause to be sent down to this house copies of all telegrams between the provincial government or any of its members, and any such person or persons, with respect to obtaining the mounted police for the Kootenay district or their remaining and maintenance.

Hon. Mr. Robson—To ask leave to introduce a bill to amend the "Public School Act, 1885, 'and Amending Acts.'"

Hon. Mr. Turner—To move that the speech of his honor the lieutenant-governor at the opening of the present session be taken into consideration on Thursday next.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

TUESDAY, March 13th.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at 2:15 o'clock.

Prayers were offered by the Rev. Donald Fraser.

PETITIONS.

Mr. Orr presented a petition from the Knights of Labor, Vancouver, with respect to the Coal Mines Regulation Act.

The petition of C. B. Sword, in reference to the Sumas Dyking Act, asking that it be not repealed, was read and received.

The Matsqui Land Co.'s petition also referred to the same subject, stating that they had purchased the interest of C. B. Sword, and would repair all dykes on or before 30th November, 1888. They asked that the section proposed be not repealed. Read and received.

The petition of M. W. T. Drake and R. E. Jackson referred to the same matter, praying that the repeal act be not passed. Read and received.

The petition from residents of Vancouver and New Westminster cities prayed for the passage of the proposed amendment to the coal mines act. Read and received and ordered to be printed.

THE MISSION TO OTTAWA.

Hon. Mr. Robson presented all papers relating to the mission of a member of the government to Ottawa.

SUMAS DYKING LANDS.

Mr. Ladner moved, seconded by Mr. Orr—That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that he will cause to be sent down to this house all orders-in-council, letters and telegrams respecting the mode agreed upon between the Dominion and provincial governments of dealing with the lands embraced within what is known as the Sumas Dyking Act.

Hon. Mr. Robson said the various papers of the mission to Ottawa had been just handed in. There were some matters still pending, the papers in reference to which could not yet be handed in and might not during this session. The hon. gentleman would probably find all he wanted there.

The resolution carried.

LICENSE ACT.

Hon. Mr. Robson moved the following resolution: That this house do immediately resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider the proposed resolutions respecting the sale of intoxicating liquors, which have been distributed to hon. members in the house.

Before going into the matter the hon. mover desired to know whether they would discuss the merits of the bill now or at the second reading of the bill. He thought the latter course would be preferable.

After considerable discussion on a point of order, it was decided to postpone the consideration of the bill till a future date.

PERRY CREEK MINES.

Hon. Mr. Robson presented a return of all papers in respect to the granting of a lease of five miles of ground on Perry Creek to Col. Baker and others.

POLLING PLACES.

Mr. Semlin moved, seconded by Mr. Grant, that in the opinion of this house it is desirable that two additional polling places in the Yale district be established, one at Grand Prairie, and one at McKinney, on Rock Creek.

The hon. mover said the establishment of polling places as suggested in the resolution would be a convenience to the voting population at both places.

Hon. Mr. Robson said there was no objection to the resolution, though it was an unnecessary course to pursue. The usual course was to bring the matter before the executive. With regard to the polling place at Grand Prairie, the hon. junior member, Mr. Martin, had drawn attention to the place, and it was now receiving attention. With regard to Rock Creek, the government would take note of the matter, and make inquiries, and if necessary the polling place would be established. However, the course pursued was an unnecessary one.

After half an hour's discussion on the desirability of bringing such matters before the house by resolution, the motion carried.

BEHRING'S SEA SEIZURES.

Mr. Grant moved, seconded by Mr. Semlin, whereas a number of British sealing vessels, used in the lawful occupation of catching seals in the Behring sea, outside the three-mile limit, were seized by cruisers of the United States of America; their appliances, cargoes and catch confiscated, and their officers and crew imprisoned, thus inflicting serious personal and pecuniary injury upon British subjects; and whereas, up to the end of the first year the officers of the government of the Dominion of Canada failed to notify the owners of British vessels when clearing at the custom house for the purpose of proceeding to Behring sea to engage in seal catching that they did so at their own risk; be it therefore resolved, that a respectful address be presented to his honor the lieutenant-governor requesting him to move the Dominion government to compensate the owners of British vessels for the losses thus incurred and to obtain from the United States authorities a reimbursement of the sum so expended.

The hon. mover said it would be a satisfactory solution of the matter if the Dominion government would be urged to recoup the sealers, and they would in turn be recouped by the United States when the matter was decided. Lord Lansdowne, in a dispatch to the imperial authorities, urged that reparation should be made as quickly as possible from the United States to the British subjects who had lost their property through seizure in Behring's Sea. It was desirable in the interests of the people of our province that the Dominion government should be induced to take the step indicated in the resolution, and if the United States were in the wrong they would be reimbursed the amount advanced; and, if not, he considered that up to the end of 1888 the Dominion government were at fault in not notifying owners of the danger from seizure that they incurred in sealing in Behring's Sea.

The resolution carried without debate.

LAND ORDINANCE REGISTRY.

House went into committee on the Land Registry Ordinance, 1870, Amendment Bill, (Hon. T. Davie), Mr. Croft in the chair.

Committee reported the bill complete with amendments, to be considered Wednesday.

NICOLA MINING CO.

Mr. Martin, in moving the second reading of the Nicola Mining Co. Incorporation Bill, said its object was to give this company the right to hold 2500 acres of land. Owing to an oversight in the Mineral Act, companies incorporated outside the province had no miner's rights, and as a result, while British capital to the extent of £30,000 annually had been invested in all parts of the world, none has found its way into the mines of this province. The reason that London or New York companies would only incorporate in those cities was because their shares were quoted on the stock boards, and can be sold at any time for their market value, which is not the case with mining shares of mining companies incorporated within the province. The only privilege asked in this bill was that the Nicola Co. be granted power to hold 2,500 acres of land adjacent to the mines for the purpose of getting the timber thereon for roasting the ore, which was of a refractory nature, and cannot be treated without. The land in question was owned by private individuals and the bill in no way affected crown lands. He trusted the bill would meet with the approval of the house, for otherwise the industry might be greatly injured.

Mr. Beaven said that the present bill was similar to the Texada scandal, for it was shown that a minister (the Hon. Mr. Turner) had been acquiring mineral lands. He thought the hon. leader of the government should be consistent. He was the main mover in the Texada matter, and should certainly, to be consistent, oppose the present bill, for which there were facts.

The speaker was proceeding to enter into the details of the Texada scandal, when Hon. Mr. Dunsmuir rose to a question of order.

Mr. Speaker said he had before stated that he did not see the connection the Texada matter had with the bill, and could not yet, though the hon. gentleman stated that it did. He considered it a waste of time.

Mr. Beaven said the connection was that the hon. leader of the government to be consistent should take the same stand now as he had in the Texada matter. Though the hon. mover stated that the bill was for the purpose of acquiring private lands, the bill did not state so.

The second reading carried; to be committed Wednesday.

BEHRING'S SEA SEIZURES.

On the adjourned debate on the Behring's Sea seizures resolution (Mr. Higgins), Mr. Duck moved in amendment, seconded by Hon. Mr. Vernon, that all the words in the fifth paragraph after "surprise" in the first line be omitted, and the following substituted therefor: "and regret that no effective steps appear to have been taken for the purpose of securing indemnity for past seizures and outrages committed upon British subjects exercising their undoubted rights in Behring's Sea, and by which several enterprising citizens have suffered serious loss and an important industry has been crippled."

The resolution as amended passed.

MECHANICS' LIEN BILL.

The Mechanics' Lien Bill, on report, was slightly amended.

Mr. Duck asked if the hon. acting attorney general intended to introduce the bill of which he had given notice.

Hon. T. Davie said that he had waived his bill, which he had all ready, in consideration of the wishes of several who desired that the present measure should be given a trial. He was afraid that the hon. introducer of the present bill and the hon. leader of the opposition would find that the measure which they had insisted on passing without amendment would have the exact opposite effect to that which was desired. It was stated that the bill had been prepared on the suggestion of the board of trade of Vancouver and the laborers themselves to meet certain cases and that was the payment of the laborers of an absconding debtor, who had moneys coming from the corporation of Vancouver. But if the introducers thought that they had met the case, they might at once dispel their illusion for the bill did not contain any provisions whereby the laborers could secure the moneys due on the work in question. He had pointed out that it was necessary to introduce a clause which would allow of the collection of wages due on civic and government works, but the present bill did not provide any machinery whereby such a desirability could be attained. The introducer of the measure, the honorable member for Westminster city, had insisted that the bill be passed as it was prepared, or not at all, and if disaster resulted it would be the fault of its introducers. The — section placed the laborer upon the same footing as a sub-contractor and another subjected him to a delay of thirty days after the completion of his work before getting his pay.

Mr. Bole took issue with the contention of the honorable gentleman. His theory was opposed to constitutional government. His hon. friend said that if any defect was found in the bill it would rest with its introducers, for he had washed his hands of the whole matter. This was not be an ingenious position for him to take, but it certainly did not allow him to withdraw from the support he had already given. He (Mr. D.) did not desire to oppose the measure, and now wished to withdraw all responsibility for its passage. The speaker quoted sections from authorities to show the duties of ministers, which proved that the latter's duties were to oppose and point out any defects in any measure introduced by a private member. With regard to liens and government buildings, as a private member he could not introduce such a clause and had expected that it would emanate from the government. If there was any usage whereby he could introduce such a clause he would be glad to do so. With respect to the bill, he believed it would would be in the interest of the workingman in preventing the taking of wildcat contracts, and allowing the contractors to skip over the line with a margin of profit in their pocket and their workmen unpaid. He was willing to take a stand on the merits of the bill. He thought perhaps it would be better to defer the adoption of the report for the present, and to reprint the bill with the slight amendments which would be made.

Hon. Mr. Davie said, if agreeable to the hon. introducer, he would bring in a series of amendments which would meet the requirements which he had pointed out.

Mr. Bole would like to see the amendments first before consenting to them.

Mr. Beaven said that the attorney-general's contentions passed comprehension. It was his duty to bring in amendments which he thought necessary without asking permission of a member of the opposition. His position was a peculiar one—in fact (laughing) it was the funniest thing he had ever heard of and he had heard many funny things.

Hon. Mr. Dunsmuir—Well, that is the first time I have seen you laugh. (Great laughter.)

Mr. Grant moved the adjournment of the debate. He did not think it was necessary for him to say anything further than that which had already been stated.

Mr. Higgins also thought that the tactics of the hon. introducer in forcing this measure through without amendment were not calculated to produce legislation of the character required. He would aid the hon. attorney-general in every way in his power to make the act a workable one and in the interests of those whom it was designed to benefit.

Hon. T. Davie closed the debate remarking that the opposition who talked so loudly in favor of the laborer seemed devoid of either the ability or desire of bringing in amendments for his protection—but whilst abusing (Mr. Davie) they had left the task to him.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Mr. Ladner, in moving the second reading of the Land Act Amendment Bill, said the object of the act was to permit of parties who had made the necessary improvements and yet had not complied with all the technicalities, to acquire a title to their lands.

Mr. Bole approved of the measure, and thought that it should be considered in committee at the same time as the chief commissioner's bill. The bill was in favor of the settlers who were entitled to receive their lands.

Hon. Mr. Vernon requested that the discussion be deferred until the land act he was to bring in in the course of a few days was brought before the house.

Mr. Ladner consented and the debate was adjourned till Thursday.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS ACT.

Hon. T. Davie said the sole object of the act was to allow of an appeal to the supreme court from the decision of a judge. It was desirable that an independent tribunal should be provided to try election appeals, and no better means could be furnished than the supreme court. The act was simply for the purpose of providing an appeal.

Mr. Beaven thought that the principle of the bill was good, and it would receive his hearty support, for it was but right that an appeal should be had in the case of an election trial.

Hon. Mr. Dunsmuir thought it a measure calculated to furnish business for the lawyers.

The second reading carried.

House adjourned.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Beaven—To move that a respectful address be presented to his honor the lieutenant-governor requesting to cause to be sent down to this house copies of all orders in council, telegrams or letters respecting the proroguing of the legislative assembly from the 15th December, 1887, to the 16th February, 1888, and the issuance of the proclamation, dated 7th January, 1888, summoning the legislature to meet for the dispatch of business on the 27th January, 1888. Also for copies of all recommendations of the executive council, or orders in council, letters, or telegrams, that have passed between his honor the lieutenant-governor and the premier, the Hon. A. E. B. Davie, or any other member of the executive council, relating to the above mentioned acts of proroguing or summoning the legislative assembly.

Hon. Mr. Robson—To move the following motion, that this house do immediately resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider the desirability of reporting to the house "An act respecting the sale of intoxicating liquors and the issue of licenses therefor."

Mr. Orr—To ask leave to introduce a bill entitled "An act for protection of workingmen's wages."

THE MISSION TO OTTAWA

Results Attained by the Visit of the Hon. Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Mr. Robson yesterday brought down all the papers in connection with his Ottawa mission, referring to all matters which up to the present had been agreed upon between the two governments. The correspondence which led up to his being appointed by the executive to proceed on the mission was attached. The honorable gentleman, in his report, states that after his arrival at Ottawa on the 7th October, he had frequent conferences with the Dominion government, the result of which would be found in appendix "D." His memorandum goes on to state that "embracing the opportunity presented by my presence at Ottawa, I urged upon the attention of the Dominion government—*inter alia*—the following subjects, with the results respectively stated:

1. The Dominion government assented to the appointment of two additional county court judges for the present.

2. The lands on the lower Fraser, commonly known as dyking lands, are to be considered in the province.

3. The granting of subsidies to certain railways to be carefully considered, but no absolute promise was made.

4. The opinion was expressed that it would not be politic to include the Behring's Sea question within the scope of the international fisheries' commission.

5. The question of the settlement of the boundary between Canada and Alaska was earnestly considered, and the advisability of British Columbia being heard before any commission appointed to deal with it was conceded.

6. A proposition to place a federal revenue cutter in the waters which wash the north-west coast of the province for the prevention of illicit traffic and protection of our fisheries, although not absolutely agreed to, was favorably entertained.

7. Assurance was given that a thorough exploration and survey of our sea fishing grounds would be undertaken during the approaching summer.

8. Although no definite promise was made, reason was given to expect that the Dominion government would establish an immigration agency at the western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

9. It was agreed that one moiety of the expense of the Metlakahtla commission should be borne by the Dominion.

Other questions of public importance were discussed, but as they still form the subject of confidential communication, it would be improper to allude to them more definitely here.

I am Sir,
Your obd't servant,
(Signed) JOHN ROBSON.

[APPENDIX C.]

OTTAWA, 18th October, 1887.

The undersigned begs respectfully to submit the following facts and suggestions for the consideration of the hon. the minister of customs and the hon. the minister of marine and fisheries:

I. For years many British Columbia Indians have been in the habit of annually repairing to United States territory to engage in hop picking and other employment. These Indians have usually invested their earnings in various kinds of supplies including, generally, considerable quantities of intoxicating liquors, bringing these supplies into British Columbia without payment of customs duty.

Although in the first instance these supplies were for the most part for the use of those bringing them in, the Indians soon began to traffic in them; and it has become a common practice for Indians to embark in this smuggling trade or business.

As above said, considerable quantities of intoxicating liquor have in this way been brought in, and that to the great demoralization and injury of the Indian population and serious injury to legitimate trade on the north-west coast of British Columbia—not infrequently leading to breaches of the peace and endangering the lives and property of the white population.

II. It is believed that with the removal of the Metlakahtla Indians to Alaska and the establishment there of a large and attractive trading post contiguous to British Columbia territory, there is every probability of the bulk of the trade of our Indians being attracted to that post, and that the trade so attracted will evade duty of customs unless prevented by special and effective measures for the protection of the revenue in these waters.

It is obvious that, in addition to the loss of revenue and demoralization of the Indians by the free and unrestricted introduction of the vilest kinds of intoxicants, the province is, by these means, deprived of a large amount of trade to which it is justly entitled.

III. The oolachan fisheries on the Naas river are relied upon by our Indians for an annual supply of an essential article of food, Naas river being the great, if not the sole, oolachan fishing ground, the Indians of the entire coast, including many from Alaska, annually resort thither; and it is believed that not only will the Metlakahtla Indians, who have recently gone out from us to reside in Alaska, return annually to their accustomed fishing grounds in British Columbia waters, but that other foreign Indians will flock to the Naas in larger numbers than ever, and that the river will be over-fished and our own Indians driven to the wall and deprived of this most important means of sustenance.

So alarmed have our Indians become in face of this threatened invasion that they have already sent remonstrances to the authorities at Victoria upon the subject.

IV. The undersigned would respectfully suggest as the most effective remedy for both of the above mentioned abuses or grievances that a revenue cutter be statedly employed in the waters which wash the western shores of British Columbia, as well for the protection of the revenue as the valuable fisheries. The presence of such a craft would not only protect the revenue and the fisheries—of themselves more than sufficient to justify the entire expense—but it would exert a most salutary influence in the interests of civilization and trade along the seaboard and in many ways more than compensate for the cost involved.

All of which is respectfully submitted.
(Signed) JNO. ROBSON,
Delegate from B.C. Gov't.

[APPENDIX D.]

OTTAWA, 28th Oct., 1887.

My Dear Mr. Robson:

In accordance with an understanding I beg leave to state the results of our several conferences on the matters which have been subjects of correspondence between the Government of Canada and that of British Columbia:

1. On the subject of water for irrigation purposes for the Indian reserves, I understand it to be your intention to obtain the necessary legislation to enable the Indian agents, as representing the Indian bands, to obtain water for irrigation purposes in the same manner as they are obtained by white settlers.

2. In relation to Indian reserves our understanding is that where land cannot be had in the immediate vicinity of Indian settlements in cases where it is desired to make reserves, the department of Indian affairs will be permitted to select lands suitable for such a purpose elsewhere, and in as close proximity to the Indian settlements as possible.

3. In relation to the general question of the administration of justice and the preservation of the peace among the Indians which has arisen on the following points:—

(*a*) The appointment of constables, and the erection of gaols in the northern part of Vancouver Island and the adjoining mainland.

(*b*) The use of gaols and the assistance of local constables in the Cowichan district—

(*c*) And the disposal of fines received under the penal clause of the Indian liquor act—

It is understood that the government of British Columbia will assume the ordinary cost of the administration of justice and the preservation of peace among the Indians of the province, they receiving in return therefor that portion of the fines imposed which has hitherto been reserved for the Indian fund.

It will be necessary to have legislation on this subject, and it is understood that the required legislation will be obtained at the next session of parliament.

. . . . . .

Yours truly,
(Signed) THOS. WHITE.

THE CROFTERS.

TO THE EDITOR:—In looking over the columns of THE COLONIST I noticed a letter on the crofter question, signed "Merchant." I wish to say a few words about that letter, as "Merchant" has a rather savage fling at the crofters through the medium of a letter which appeared in the London *Times*.

The writer says that no family labored more for the benefit of the people of the Lewis, than the present owners of the land and also (in effect) that no people have proved more unworthy or less deserving of help.

I will give an extract from a letter which appeared in the *Scotsman* about this matter:

"It is generally acknowledged that Sir James Matheson meant well as a proprietor. He expended vast sums of money in various undertakings. But large sums were sunk in paraffine works, which proved a financial failure, in improving peat bogs and draining land, with the result of sheer waste of money. Enormous sums were lavished on the castle grounds, etc."

The writer goes on to say that the same sums "judiciously expended would have produced noble results." Whereas, I suppose, the only real benefit to the people was what these works were in progress. Any person ill-naturedly inclined, in passing through the Lewis, could, if so inclined, find a great deal to say against the people, but circumstances make them what they are. A short extract from another letter will serve to show how unfortunately and hopelessly they are situated: "What are the circumstances? The population is 25,487. The gross agricultural value is £12,791. There is no manufacture and scarcely any employment."

One more extract, this time from a petition that was presented by the crofters of Achmore to the proprietor for more land. They "stated that they had come to explain how they were reduced to beggary, although all of them were in good circumstances when they had crofts of decent size. By the ruling of the estate you will observe that twenty-five years ago the people of Garrynahire were removed and sent in upon Achmore, and furthermore were encroached upon as late as six years ago, when you removed crofters from Callernish and placed them upon us at Achmore, which thereby overstocked the place so much that we are now reduced to poverty." They, therefore, prayed that they should be returned to Garrynahire, which would support a number of them in comfort. It seems they had been removed in order that a large farm might be made of their crofts, and the first question now was, whether they would be willing to take over the stock of the present tenant at a valuation? People reduced to poverty were naturally not able to do that, and so the matter dropped. Now, if this is the manner in which they are treated, remove them from places which are improved and which they and their forefathers before them have occupied, *simply* because it is suitable for a large farm, I, for my part, question both the charitableness and the christianity of the proprietor so doing, and think that though there may be cause for gratefulness on their part, there is also cause for the reverse. In such an altogether hopeless state of affairs for them, one can easily see how they might be looked upon as lazy and thriftless.

But fortunately this is not the first time that crofter emigration has taken place. The maritime provinces and Ontario are in portions almost entirely peopled by them, and who will say that they were not desirable settlers or that they have not done well. Their names are familiar household words in the Dominion of Canada and deservedly so—McDonalds, McKenzies, McDougalls, Camerons and many other well-known names in Canada, whose immediate ancestors belonged to the crofter class. It is the same in Australia and New Zealand and in fact in all parts of the English-speaking world. Wherever they have a chance of improving their condition there are no people more willing or ready to take advantage of it.

There is, however, one portion of "Merchant's" letter which I agree with and that is that the Imperial government should defray the expense of bringing them here. And then it is a matter that should receive grave and earnest consideration at the hands of our legislators. It is not sufficient to bring them here and place them upon timber lands along the coast. In Manitoba the crofter emigration is a complete success, but there were instructors sent along with them whose duty it was to see that they got started rightly and that they received some knowledge of the requirements necessary to success in their new mode of life. In British Columbia where I understand fishing is to be greatly depended upon it should be the duty of the government to see that a market is provided; fish curing or canning establishments of some kind. This is a paying business and private individuals might be induced to undertake it. If this is done they will at once become self-supporting and a most desirable acquisition to the province. Otherwise there is great danger in the scheme. In any case the first importation should not be on too extensive a scale unless well assured of the means of making a livelihood.

FARMER.

Spallumcheen, March 7th, 1888.

A MINER'S STATEMENT.

TO THE EDITOR:—I notice in your last Saturday's issue, a column and a-half of Mr. Thomas Williams' arguments against employing Chinese in coal mines. I like a man to be consistent; and can remember when I took the risk (whatever the risk was worth) of working in the same level with Mr. Williams when he was employing a Chinaman. I dare say, too, that Mr. Williams remembers when he applied to the boss for a job in the mine, and asked for a stall where he could "employ a good lump of a Chinaman!" Does this look as if he thought them dangerous?

Another thing: Mr. Williams says that it is impressed on his mind that the Chinaman killed and two burned during the sinking of No. 4 shaft, Wellington, was owing to the steam jet having been left in charge of a sailor. The steam jet was in charge of Harry Adams (foreman of the shift), the man who was killed. He ordered the jet to be shut off, but forgot to have it turned on again; and I mind it turned out that when, after firing, Harry